

Poverty Condition of *Lipa' Saqbe* Mandar Weavers: Initial Findings from Agriculture Area of West Sulawesi, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Lipa' Saqbe Mandar (or just called *Lipa' saqbe*) is an unique culture of Mandar ethnic, it is still preserved today, because the Mandar people wear *Lipa' Saqbe* at every event held both in traditional ceremonies of Mandar culture like weddings or grief moments. *Lipa' Saqbe* weavers are the majority of mandarist fishermen and the wives of the peasants who in the concept of indigenous culture mandar adheres to the principle of *Siwali Parriq* which means the wives of Mandar descendants are able to work to help the family economy, one of them by weaving. This paper attempt to calculate weavers household who are living below poverty line and how severe they are? The study employed Foster-Greer-Torbecke (FGT) Indices Method: Head Count Index (HCI) and Poverty Gap Index (PGI). The results show that: (1) HCI of the study is 0.7333 indicate that 70.33% of *Lipa' Saqbe* weaver is living below poverty line, while (2) PGI reveals that the depth of poverty in weaver household is, however, close to zero (0) indicating that no poverty severity gap among households. The low income of Mandar silk weavers is the marketing system through traders or distributors. Although most of the weavers sell their woven products directly to the local market, the purchasing power of local communities is quite low so that their woven products are sold to wholesalers or distributors.

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Keywords:

Lipa' saqbe; Cultural; Poverty; Mandar

1. Introduction

The potential of natural silk market is very promising. According to Bank of Indonesia (2000), the need for national silk yarn in 1999 is 2,000 tons per year and the world silk demand reaches 92,000 tons per year. In 1999 the national production capacity of 174 tons per year, of course, this becomes a huge opportunity for the industry of sutry in Indonesia. According to data from the International Semicipation Commission (2012) Indonesia is ranked 6th World as a producer of wet cocoon.

The Government made efforts to encourage the development of national silkworm, in this case the Ministry of Forestry, the Ministry of Industry, and the Ministry of Cooperatives and Small and Medium Enterprises issued a joint regulation No. P47/MENHUT-II/2006, No 29/M-IND/PER/6/2007 and No. 07/PER/M.KUKM/VI/2006 on the fostering and development of national natural silk by the approach of *kalster*. Through this joint regulation, the government builds natural silk cluster in an integrated way from upstream to downstream.

One of the downstream industries of silk weaving is the result of culture in Indonesia including West Sulawesi. The tradition of weaving itself has been very long in Indonesia, as well as the different forms and characteristics produced are influenced by different geographical and cultural locations. The tradition of weaving is usually done mostly by women. Weaving can also be classified as a store of valuables that become assets that are one of the household strategies of weavers to survive.

West Sulawesi province as a producer of Mandar silk fabrics still has various problems both physically, sales, and marketing. Mandar silk scarves producing villages do not yet have adequate facilities and infrastructure, this is seen from the condition of weaver house that is not suitable as a place of production and kiosks, facilities to support the business of *lipa 'saqbe Mandar*, and the absence of centers *Lipa weaving saqbe Mandar* which can be a tourism and handicraft tourism in West Sulawesi Province such as way of making and weaving, yarn spinning, cultivation of *murbey* and silkworm. Weavers are part of a rural household whose main source of livelihood is agriculture. Ellis (2000) classifies these sources of income into on-farm, off-farm and non-farm. On-farm activities relate to livelihoods derived from agricultural activities on their own land. Off-farm activities relate to livelihoods derived from the farm activities of other people's land/leases. While non-farm activities related to the source of income outside of agricultural activities. This is a reason why the government should prioritize the revitalization of agricultural and rural development (Ekasari *et al.*, 2013), and agricultural economic activity is still the pioneer to reduce rural poverty directly in the country (Arsyad & Kawamura, 2010).

Poverty is a worldwide problem hit developing countries seriously (Arsyad *et al.*, 2014). Poverty is one of the problems that arise in development together with the problem of unemployment and the disparities that all three are related. In the context of development in Indonesia, the problem of poverty has become increasingly prominent since the economic crisis hit Indonesia in line with the sharp increase of the poor population caused by the economic crisis. poverty in Indonesia has become a national problem that even the government is working on efforts to alleviate the poverty of Indonesians.

The culture of weaving in West Sulawesi Province is a form of livelihood diversification that functions as a safety valve in the family economy. Especially in rural households that make Agriculture and Fisheries the main source of income. Agricultural conditions are not always profitable and success is determined by many factors, one of which is the weather factor, making the income of this sector is not always good. Behind the tantalizing opportunities of sucking but the life of the weavers in the province of West Sulawesi is still very poor so it is necessary efforts to overcome poverty *lipa' saqbe* weaver. Therefore, the research objective is to analyze percentage of weaver household living below poverty line and analyze poverty gap index among weaver households.

2. Method

2.1. Data and Research Site

The main data was collected by surveying at the farm level with the instrument questionnaires. For calculating the percentage of weaver who are living below poverty line and its determinant. Data was processed by SPSS 8.50. The research site was selected by XY scatter plot method with two locations by considering weaver center of production.

2.2. Head Count Index

To calculate the percentage of percentage of weavers who are living below the provincial poverty line, the analysis used the Foster-Greer-Torbecke poverty indices (Arsyad *et al.*, 2014) by following formula: $HCI = q/n$; where q is the number of poor and n is the total sample.

2.3. Poverty Severity Index

The Poverty Severity Index is calculated by the following formula (Mabughi & Selim 2006):

$$P_1 = \frac{q}{n} \sum_{i=1}^q \left[\frac{Z - \bar{X}_i}{Z} \right]$$

Where:

Z = Provincial poverty line

X = Revenue

Q = Number of poor people

N = Sample size

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Head Count Index

The calculation of Head Count Index (HCI) poverty of Lipa 'Saqbe Mandar weavers is 0,7333. It indicates that about 73.33% Lipa' Saqbe Mandar weavers has income below the provincial poverty line. This shows that most Lipa' Saqbe weavers of Mandar in West Sulawesi province live in poor condition, it is certainly necessary effort by the government to improve prosperity of households, especially non-weaver income (agriculture and non-agriculture). This is in line with study conducted by Janvry, Sadoulet, Zhu (2002), that rural poverty reduction is generally sought in the role of agriculture in contributing to farm incomes. However, non-farm employment in rural areas can also be a major contributor. This indicates that, rural communities need non-farm income/employment information outside of agriculture/aquaculture (Arsyad and Kawamura, 2010). In addition, CRIEC-World Bank (2002) also reveals the importance of information availability. It was found that 30% of the households surveyed receive an income just sufficient for food requirement. The poor usually come from farmers who are having lack of asset both land and equipment as well as information (market, technology, capital and business opportunity). Then the bank classified that the main factors determine the gap between the poor and the rich are access to information. All these indicate that, "Agriculture/Fisheries & Non-Agriculture Extensions" can also be expected to be the next important variable in reducing poverty directly. This is a reason why agricultural extension services are

supposed to fulfill many aims, from reducing rural poverty and improved livelihoods for rural households to increasing the overall production and contributing to foreign exchange earnings from exports. However, the level and percentage of this contribution may vary from one situation to another (Mahaliyanaarachchi and Bandara, 2006). At the same time, in order to increase farmer households' income and to alleviate the rural poverty, it is necessary to help farmers to attain more education, to give farmers useful off-farm skill training, and to supply more recruitment information service (Gonghua and Zhijun, 2014).

3.2. Poverty Severity Index

The calculation reveals that Poverty Gap Index of Lipa' Saqbe Weavers is 0.11. It indicates that, the average income of weavers households falls short (close to zero) of the poverty line, meaning there is no a severe poverty gap in the community. It is important to emphasize that, this facts shouldn't be interpreted to mean that no poverty situation. In facts, more than 70% of households are living below poverty line.

3.3. Raw Materials and Marketing Networks

Demand for lipa' saqbe tends to increase. However, because the use of silk woven cloth as sarong is increasing, silk weavers begin to use silk thread from outside, ie from Wajo Regency to imported yarns from Tiongkok. Therefore, since the 70s silk weavers in Polewali Mandar, West Sulawesi used genuine silk threads both from silkworm cultivation produced by Polewali Mandar communities and yarns from Wajo and China. Until the last few decades, Polewali Mandar silk weavers began to use cytetical yarns for economic and practical reasons compared to using original silk threads.

The use of synthetic yarn as a raw material for making Mandar silk fabric brings its own polemic to the Mandar silk weavers. This is because the price of fabric produced from synthetic yarns more ogled consumers because the price is very cheap. The price of Mandar silk sarongs using synthetic yarn is sold from IDR 200,000 - 250,000. While silk sarongs that use original silk thread ranges from IDR 1,000,000 - 1,500,000 (1USD = 13,000 IDR) depending on the difficulty level of the motive and the coloring process.

The advantage gained by the weavers of any silk made from synthetic yarn is only about IDR 30,000 - 50,000. While the benefits obtained from selling original silk sarongs can reach IDR 200,000 - 500,000. It is rare consumers who want to buy or order the original silk fabric, in addition to expensive, the manufacturing process is also quite long. Synthetic yarns sold on the market are generally colored, so weavers can weave the yarn they buy. Unlike with the original silk thread. Before weaving, the original silk thread should be washed first with certain washing techniques that can take up to 3 days. After the washing stage, the yarn still has to go through the staining process (Mandar people call it *maccinggaq*). Only then can the yarn be woven. So it is not surprising if the price is quite expensive, because it takes a long process before the thread is ready to be woven.

In addition, another causal factor that decreases income of Mandar silk weavers is the marketing system through traders or distributors. Although most of the weavers sell their woven products directly to the local market, the purchasing power of local communities is quite low so that their woven products are sold to wholesalers or distributors. However, wholesalers generally fix prices that are low enough to the weavers so that the benefits of the weavers become decreased. But this condition

forced the weavers to keep selling the woven products to the wholesalers due to the lack of buyers in the local market. In addition, limited access to information makes the weavers unable to expand market share, including through online sales. Therefore, an alternative solution to increase the benefits of weavers is to order directly to the weavers. This problem causes the decrease in income of silk weavers in Polewali Mandar, West Sulawesi. In addition, the problems of the system of pemsaran through wholesalers, the substitution of the original silk fabric into synthetic silk fabrics made the weavers slowly began to leave the original silk fabric wears and feared would make the original Mandar silk cloth to be extinct. These findings indicate that the weaving profession cannot be expected to improve the weaver's well-being.

4. Conclusion

It can be concluded that the percentage of Lipa 'Saqbe Mandar weavers households who are living below the provincial poverty line is 73.33% and the Poverty Severity Index is 0.11. It indicates that, the average income of weavers households falls short (close to zero) of the poverty line, meaning there is no a severe poverty gap in the community. The decreases in the income of Mandar silk weavers is the marketing system through traders or distributors. Although most of the weavers sell their woven products directly to the local market, the purchasing power of local communities is quite low so that their woven products are sold to wholesalers or distributors.

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